VOICES OF DEFIANCE

An Encyclopedia of Singapore's Contemporary Human Rights Activists

2025

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A Human

FOREWORD

This encyclopedia is a tribute to Singapore's vibrant activist community, born from a political science research project exploring the dynamic landscape of contemporary activism. The stories within these pages capture the courage, resilience, and determination of individuals who, against formidable challenges and personal risks, have dared to drive change.

As you delve into their narratives, you'll encounter activists who wield pens, raise voices, or rally communities. Though their methods differ, their shared vision unites them: a better, more just world. We chose to share this compilation publicly because these stories inspired us profoundly, and we believe they will ignite the same spark of empowerment in you.

Let these accounts not only inform but also inspire you to act, because, like these activists, you too have the power to shape a brighter future.

Your Fellow
Singaporeans

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she/her

NURUL AFIQAH

Field(s) of Interest	
Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Monday of Palestine Solidarity
- Transformative Justice Collective
- We Defy POFMA
- BDS Movement in SG
- Workers Make Possible

"We came to talk about POFMA and censorship, and we were met with censorship. We came to talk about the disproportionate response to activism in Singapore, and was met with a hugely disproportionate response to what was essentially two ordinary people going to an MPS session. We are not perfect, and we are committed to growing and learning. But we stand firm in our truth, and in our faith." *Afiqah and Sabrina, 2025*

Major Events Led/Participated In

"Disrupting" Meet-The-People Session (MPS) with Minister K. Shanmugam [May 12, 2025] - Identified as the key members of the Monday of Palestine Solidarity group at Min Shanmugam's Chong Pang ward, Afiqah and her sister Sabrina courageously confronted Min Shanmugam to discuss the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA). They faced accusations of being disruptive and misusing MPS sessions meant for pressing political matters.

Pro-Palestine Campaign to Demand Accountability [June 9, 2025] - Afiqah and her sister Sabrina, under the Monday of Palestine Solidarity, led a campaign urging pro-Palestine Singaporeans to confront ministers at MPS sessions and contact the MFA, Israeli Embassy, and relevant embassies, demanding accountability for the Maldeen's illegal interception and safe passage for the Tunisian Land Convoy. The group has attended at least 9 MPS to speak with various ministers across Singapore.

Labour Day Rally [May 1, 2024] - Afiqah spoke on behalf of all healthcare professionals as a locum staff nurse at the 2024 Labour Day Rally held at Hong Lim Park. In her speech, she talked about how healthcare workers have been pushed to the brink and that they are fighting for better outcomes for their fellow workers.

More About Afiqah

Afiqah is a Singaporean activist known for her advocacy for healthcare workers' rights and broader social justice issues. Her decade of experience in public hospitals and welfare homes ended in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic when she was sentenced to 7-weeks jail for breaching a Stay-Home Notice (SHN) after a trip to Australia. She did so by leaving her home seven times to buy bubble tea and assist a friend. After her jail term, she became a locum staff nurse.

Afiqah is a member of *Sick and Tired*, a collective amplifying the voices of healthcare workers and patients, pushing for a dignified healthcare system. Her activism extends to confronting systemic issues, when she confronted Minister Shanmugam alongside her sister Sabrina, at his Meet-the-People Session (MPS). As a part of Monday of Palestine Solidarity group, the sisters sought to discuss their concerns about the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA), despite not being residents of his constituency.

> *"When we looked around, his security staff and volunteers had completely encircled us and quite a few of them were filming…We came in good faith, and we were perfectly polite, so why were we treated differently from other citizens, as if we were a threat? Anyone would have felt disturbed to be surrounded and filmed by multiple people, but we felt especially vulnerable as women."*
> *(Nurul Afiqah and Sabrina, 2025)*

Afiqah's activism includes speaking at the Labour Day 2024 Rally, where she criticized low wages and grueling conditions for healthcare workers, reflecting her commitment to labor and Palestinian rights.

In Singapore's restrictive civic space, Afiqah's bold actions—despite risks of legal repercussions—highlight her as a rising voice for healthcare equity and political accountability.

he/him

AHMAD AMSYAR

Field(s) of Interest

Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Community Outreach Chewsday
- Bold Play
- MUIS
- Perdaus
- Transformative Justice Collective

"The best way for us to make a change, for us to influence other people, is to be the change that we want to see… showing good character to other people, it is a better way of advocating for your cause than to guilt trip them into believing what you believe in." *Amsyar, 2024*

Major Events Led/Participated In

Amplifying Malay-Muslim Voices on Faith and Policy [December 24, 2023] – In late 2023, Amsyar became an active member of Bold Play, a local social activism collective initially focused on Singapore's political landscape. Through his involvement, he conducted compelling interviews, most notably with Malay Muslim community members, exploring themes of faith, local policies impacting the community, and pressing issues like the "Dadah Itu Haram" (Drugs are Forbidden) campaign.

Interviewing local activists [June 24, 2024] – Furthering Bold Play's interest in local issues like the anti-death penalty, Amsyar, as part of the collective, actively conducted interviews with local activists like Kirsten Han, Elijah Tay, and Kokila Annamalai, engaging the local audience to gather their perspectives on issues such as the anti-death penalty movement.

Community Outreach Chewsday [Aug, 2023] – Prior to Bold Play, at 22, Amsyar launched a weekly video series called Community Outreach Chewsday (COC) on his personal social media profiles, where he actively engaged the public to address overlooked issues like the NTU Muslim Society and the Palestinian cause, bringing attention to topics often overshadowed by mainstream media.

More About Amsyar

Amsyar is an undergraduate pursuing Linguistics, Multilingual Studies, and Psychology at Nanyang Technological University, and has emerged as a dynamic student activist, fostering nuanced civic engagement in Singapore through his social media interviews.

Since 2023, Amsyar initiated a series of incisive social media interviews. Most recently, he has engaged local activists like Kirsten Han, Jolovan Wham, Elijah Tay and Suraendher Kumarr, enriching public discourse with his own thoughtful commentary while amplifying critical voices. In these interviews, he discussed with the guests critical issues such as anti-drug, anti-death penalty laws and migrant workers' rights.

On local politics, especially during Singapore's elections, Amsyar launched an "On The Ground" series, featuring dialogues with ministers, deepening discussions on governance. Furthering his commitment to the Malay Muslim community, Ahmad conducted interviews with citizens on sensitive topics, such as Minister Masagos' approach to the hijab issue and constituency welfare, promoting inclusive dialogue and empowering marginalized voices.

Further enriching his community, Amsyar produces concise video summaries of Friday sermons (khutbah), shared on his social media and often reposted by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS). These efforts broaden access to religious discourse, strengthen community cohesion, and inspire critical engagement with social and cultural issues. Amsyar's work has garnered significant attention, establishing him as a key figure in promoting constructive dialogue among Singapore's youth. His ability to bridge diverse perspectives continues to inspire meaningful conversations and drive positive change in his community..

ARIFFIN he/him SHA

Field(s) of Interest	
Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Wake Up Singapore (WUSG) – *founder*
- Network of Independent Media for Better Understanding and Support (NIMBUS) – *exco 2024/25*
- Singapore Democratic Party (SDP)

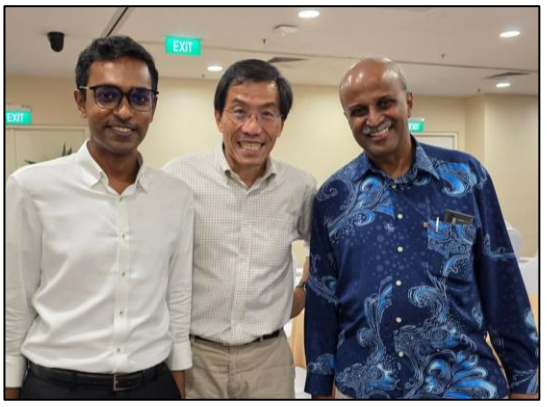
"I've always been a staunch advocate against racism. For us minorities, the honest truth is that such remarks are not new. And, no, it is not casual racism, because there's nothing casual about racism. I can accept that there was no malice, but intention is irrelevant when it comes to such matters." *Ariffin in response to Gigene's "K-word" remark at GE2025*

Major Events Led/Participated In

Labour Day Rally [May 1, 2024] – Ariffin set up and managed a WUSG booth with volunteers, engaging attendees and distributing Labour Day t-shirts despite a recent criminal defamation charge. Supported by groups like Workers Make Possible, his efforts underscored WUSG's role in amplifying grassroots issues often overlooked by mainstream media.

Singapore Independent Media Fair [June 1, 2023 & July 20, 2024] – This is an event organized by Singapore Unbound and Mekong Review to promote independent media through exhibitor booths and discussions on press freedom. Ariffin served as a panelist in various forums across the years, sharing insights on the necessity of alternative voices in Singapore's tightly controlled media landscape.

#ReturnOurCPF Rally [July 12, 2014] - At age 17, Ariffin delivered a speech titled "Power to the People" at Hong Lim Park, rallying hundreds against government proposals to use CPF funds for overseas medical expenses without full consent. He invoked Gandhi's words on non-violent resistance, urging persistence: "This fight won't be over until we win. It's time to Wake Up, Singapore."



More About Ariffin

Singaporean media founder, activist, and political candidate renowned for his fearless advocacy for independent journalism and socio-political reform in Singapore's tightly regulated civic space. A law graduate and legal executive, he founded Wake Up Singapore (WUSG) in 2014 at the age of 16, establishing himself as a pivotal figure in the country's alternative media landscape, challenging state-controlled narratives and amplifying underrepresented voices.

Ariffin's activism centers on fostering transparency, public accountability, and critical discourse, particularly through WUSG's coverage of issues like migrant worker rights, healthcare disparities, election transparency, and government policies. His commitment to accessible, people-driven journalism has made WUSG a vital platform for everyday Singaporeans seeking unfiltered perspectives.

Beyond media, his recent foray into politics as a Singapore Democratic Party (SDP) candidate in the 2025 General Election for Marsiling-Yew Tee GRC underscores his dedication to systemic change, advocating for democratic reforms and social equity.

Ariffin's high-profile role has made him a target in Singapore's constrained civic environment, where dissent often faces legal repercussions. The 2024 defamation charge, linked to WUSG's reporting, underscored the chilling effect of laws like POFMA (Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act) on independent media. Despite this, his resilience has galvanized support from peers, with groups like Function 8 and New Naratif expressing solidarity during his legal battles.

Ariffin was called to the bar in August 2025 and he is now a criminal defense lawyer.

AVERY she/they

Field(s) of Interest	
Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Transformative Justice Collective
- Student Actions for Transformative Justice (SATU)

"We have a fantasy of safety that the state promises us as long as we conform to arbitrary rules of obedience. That requires us to give up other ways of imagining what a flourishing life and relating to one another can look like, that we are capable of. Showing up for Palestine is also about showing up for people everywhere else, such as against the surveillance technology being tested on Palestinians being used on us, the contribution of our taxpayer dollars to genocide, etc." *Avery, 2025*

Major Events Led/Participated In

TJFEST2025: Voices from Death Row [July 17-20, 2025] - Avery delivered a gripping account of her encounters with police scrutiny stemming from her activism. She recounted facing investigations for delivering letters to the Ministry of Home Affairs and participating in a shoe vigil honoring Palestinian martyrs. Avery vividly described a police raid on her room tied to the vigil, where officers pressed to interrogate her in her living room. Resiliently, she insisted on delaying the statement to the following day, showcasing her determination to assert her rights under pressure.

Labour Day Rally [May 25, 2025] - Avery, alongside fellow SATU members, spearheaded a student contingent at the Labour Day Rally on May 25, 2025. This powerful demonstration highlighted her dedication to elevating student voices within Singapore's labor and economic justice movements. The group she co-led stood as a testament to students' resolve to engage in the broader struggle against unfair policies, affirming their place in the legacy of resistance.

Solidarity For Gaza Memorial [January 13, 2025] - Avery was one of the students who faced police investigation over a "no-person" memorial held for victims of the Gaza war. The memorial featured 124 pairs of shoes and a white burial shroud displayed in a photograph, symbolizing lives lost and calling for justice. It also called for universities in Singapore to reconsider ties with Israeli institutions, said the police, citing a social media post.

More About Avery

Avery is a Singaporean activist and founding member of the Student Actions for Transformative Justice (SATU), a collective dedicated to transformative justice and amplifying student voices in Singapore's social and political landscape. A passionate advocate for equity and solidarity, Avery's work centers on challenging systemic injustices, from labor rights to global human rights crises, while navigating Singapore's constrained civic environment. As a student at the National University of Singapore, her activism has been shaped by her involvement with SATU and her commitment to fostering community-driven change.

Avery's activism is marked by her bold engagement with issues of justice, often at personal risk, as she confronts systemic barriers and amplifies marginalized voices. She played a central role in organizing a poignant "no-person" memorial for victims of the Gaza war, featuring 124 pairs of shoes and a white burial shroud to symbolize lives lost. The memorial, which also called for Singaporean universities to reconsider ties with Israeli institutions, drew police attention, with Avery and other students facing investigations over a related social media post. Her involvement underscored her dedication to global justice and her courage in addressing contentious issues in a tightly regulated civic space.

Avery's work, grounded in a deep commitment to transformative justice, continues to challenge apathy and inspire collective action. Through her leadership in SATU and her fearless advocacy, she is carving out space for students to engage meaningfully in Singapore's evolving social justice movement, leaving a lasting impact on the fight for equity and solidarity.

CALLA she/her

Field(s) of Interest	
Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

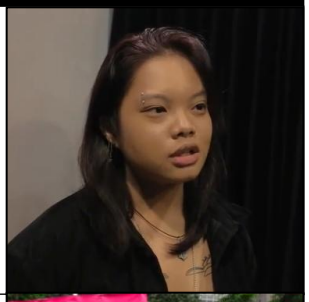
Organization(s) Involved

- Alliance Against the Death Penalty SG (AADP)
- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC)
- Student Actions for Transformative Justice (SATU)

"For many of us, the celebratory red that decorates the nation today is grimly reminiscent of the blood that stains our hands. I feel no pride or joy in a country that hides under the guise of being "neutral" when we are in fact, complicit to a genocide. I feel no pride or joy in a country that executes human lives based on arbitrary thresholds… Never let it be mistaken that your passivity is neutral, when what it is, is violent." *Calla, 2025*

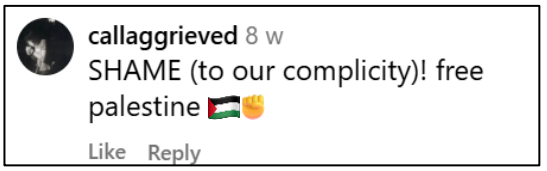
Major Events Led/Participated In

TJFEST2025: Voices from Death Row [July 17-20, 2025] - Calla participated in a human library-style event, where she connected with the personal stories of death row inmates, humanizing their experiences. She also attended a lecture by Kirsten Han on *The War on Drugs*. In a powerful interview, Calla urged others to move beyond simplistic narratives, emphasizing the humanity and agency of those on death row and challenging society to see them as more than their convictions.



Labour Day Rally [May 25, 2025] - Calla, together with other students from SATU, led a contingent at the Labour Day Rally. This event underscores her commitment to amplifying student voices in Singapore's labor and economic justice movements. The contingent she co-led represented students acknowledging their role in a broader history of resistance against inequitable policies.

Solidarity For Gaza Memorial [February 28, 2025] - Calla was one of 32 members of Singapore's civil society gathering at Clementi Police Division Headquarters in support of three students and alumni who were called in for questioning over a "no-person" memorial held for victims of the Gaza war. The memorial featured 124 pairs of shoes and a white burial shroud displayed in a photograph, symbolizing lives lost and calling for justice.



More About Calla

Calla is a familiar face in Singapore's burgeoning student activism scene, a founding member of Student Actions for Transformative Justice (SATU), the dynamic student wing of the Transformative Justice Collective (TJC). As a young leader, she has carved out a space for herself and her peers in a city-state where activism often treads a precarious line. With a blend of strategic organizing, digital savvy, and unyielding commitment, Calla has become a beacon for students seeking to challenge systemic injustices—from punitive drug laws to global human rights violations.

Beyond local issues, Calla's activism extends to global causes. She is often seen standing with other members of Singapore's civil society, advocating for Gaza war victims. Calla's presence underscores her commitment to standing firm in the face of authority, even as Singapore's strict public assembly laws cast a long shadow over such acts of dissent.

Through her personal Instagram, @callaggrieved, Calla publicizes SATU's events with a mix of urgency and hope. From sharing flyers for petition drives to posting reflections on the emotional toll of activism, her account is both a megaphone and a diary. Her posts are careful yet candid, navigating Singapore's legal sensitivities while inspiring her followers to act.

Calla's work is not without risk. Singapore's activism landscape, constrained by laws like the Public Order Act and POFMA, demands courage and creativity. Yet, she persists, driven by a vision of a world where justice is not punitive but transformative. Her story is a testament to the power of youth-led movements, showing that even in a place where dissent is costly, a single voice, amplified by community, can spark change.

CAMIRA ASRORI

she/her

Field(s) of Interest *[Highlight Correct Cell]*	
Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Alliance Against Death Penalty
- Student Actions for Transformative Justice (SATU)
- Students for Palestine Singapore
- Singaporeans for Palestine
- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC)

"reason why I no longer fear the police as much as I used to – it's all just scare tactics… thanks to the person who reported me, cause now I'm more empowered than ever." *Camira, 2024*

Major Events Led/Participated In

TJC Fest [July 19, 2025] - Sharing her personal encounter with police intimidation and community support, in lieu of her investigations surrounding letters for Palestine, Camira advocated for fellow young activists to stand strong to fight against oppressive powers in bids of building a better Singapore for future generations.

Protesting in Japan for the Palestine Cause [February 15, 2024] - Camira was detained by police at customs likely due to her posts about protesting in Japan for the Palestinian cause. In an update on Instagram, she shared that the authorities asked her to delete the posts, stating it might encourage Singaporeans to join similar overseas protests. She subsequently provided tips on how to safely share content about Palestine on social media.

Letters for Palestine at the Istana [February 2, 2024] - Camira co-organized this initiative with Sobikun Nahar, calling upon students and other supporters to participate in hand-delivering letters to the Istana. They hoped that the Singapore government will reconsider its ties with Israel, while raising awareness for the Palestinian cause. Consequently, she and two other organizers were charged under the Public Order Act for organizing a procession to promote the Palestinian cause.

More About Camira

Camira Asrori, is a Singaporean fashion entrepreneur, stylist, and social media influencer known for her bold advocacy on social justice issues, particularly Palestinian rights, alongside her work in the creative industry. Born and based in Singapore, she founded the womenswear resort label CAMIRA ASRORI in her early career, which emphasized sustainability and inclusivity for all women, including transgender women.

Camira's activism gained prominence through her vocal support for Palestine amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, blending her influencer platform (with a following on Instagram @camira.asrori) with on-the-ground efforts in a country where public dissent is tightly regulated. She frequently posts videos on her social media accounts documenting her participation in a pro-Palestinian efforts, such as the protest in Japan, which subsequently caught the attention of authorities.

> *"The genocide in Palestine should be on everyone's minds. The fact that we are being heavily censored on social media and even in real life, shows how oppressed we all are. All of us are not free until Palestine is free."*
> *(Camira, 2024)*

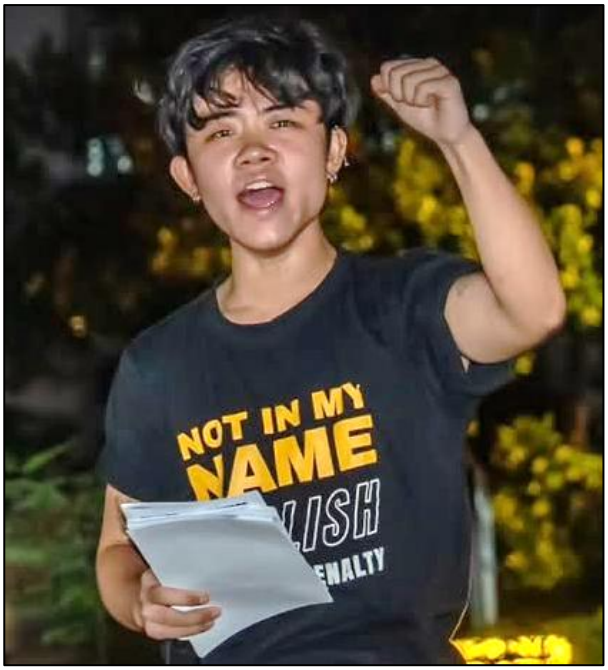
Camira studied BA (Hons) Fashion Media & Industries at LASALLE College of the Arts. She also participated in Singapore Modest Fashion Week in 2017 and had her designs featured by platforms such as Her World Singapore.

Camira's dual role as a creative professional and activist has positioned her at the intersection of Singapore's constrained civic space and the fashion world, where she faces scrutiny for amplifying marginalized causes. Despite challenges, her work inspires a movement for ethical fashion and bolder public discourse in Singapore, one outfit, post, and letter at a time.

ELIJAH TAY

they/them

Field(s) of Interest *[Highlight Correct Cell]*	
Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism



Organization(s) Involved

- My Queer Story SG – *Founder*
- Students for Palestine – *Founder*
- Students for Migrant Rights – *Founder*
- NTU Financial Aid Friends – *Co-founder*
- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC)
- Anti-Racism Coalition Singapore
- Workers Make Possible
- New Naratif
- sgacadboycott
- Red Dot United (former)
- AWARE (former)

"The core of what drives me to do anything and everything I do is love. I believe that this opens the door to amazing things like empathy and kindness and purpose… Love everyone, even if they have done something terrible, because it is with love that we find the capacity and space to see their potential and continue working in growing their characters, for them to mature and open their mindsets to the diverse reality of our world." *Elijah, 2021*

Major Events Led/Participated In

Migrant Workers' Transportation Advocacy [February 20, 2025] - A group of students from Workers Make Possible and NTU Financial Aid Friends, led by Elijah Tay, voiced support for the banning of the unsafe practice of transporting migrant workers in lorries, advocating for their safety and dignity. The event, backing a broader campaign by rights groups, featured a joint statement to push for policy change.

Letters for Palestine at the Istana [February 2, 2024] - To address the Gaza humanitarian crisis, around 70 individuals gathered at Plaza Singapura and marched to the Istana to deliver letters urging Singapore to sever diplomatic relations with Israel. Elijah was an active participant in the group, marching in solidarity to advocate for the Palestinian cause. On Jan 11, 2024, 17 youths, led by Elijah, had also delivered solidarity with Palestine letters to the Office.

Fix Schools Not Students [January 26, 2021] - Elijah was one of the organisers of a protest outside the Ministry of Education to demand stronger protections for LGBTQ+ students against discrimination in schools. As a result of this public protest, they were arrested, and later, given a 12-month conditional warning in participation of a public assembly.

More About Tay

Born on 5 Jan 2002, Eiljah Tay embarked on their activist journey at the tender age of 14, weaving a vibrant tapestry of advocacy that has since made them a resonant voice in Singapore's social justice landscape. Identifying as non-binary and bisexual, Elijah founded @MyQueerStorySG, a platform dedicated to amplifying authentic narratives from Singapore's queer community. As a staunch advocate for queer rights, they champion the need for a broad, inclusive network of allies to uplift queer youth, passionately urging students to dismantle discrimination against transgender peers and foster a more accepting society.

> *"When I was 16, I attended the #Ready4Repeal town hall event... It inspired me to help tell stories of the discrimination queer people face here… When queer people feel rejected, having our community behind us gives us confidence, and the courage to be true to ourselves." (Elijah, 2019)*

Elijah's activism extends far beyond queer rights, threading through the fabric of community organizing and class consciousness. They engage deeply with groups like the Transformative Justice Collective and co-founded NTU Financial Aid Friends, reflecting their commitment to economic equity. Their advocacy also embraces global causes, including Palestinian liberation and migrant rights, through their involvement with Students for Palestine and Students for Migrant Rights. Their voice has reached broader audiences through platforms like New Naratif, where they shared their insights in a compelling YouTube interview.

Currently studying sociology at Nanyang Technological University, Elijah's academic pursuits sharpen their lens on societal inequities, illuminating the structural injustices that shape lives both locally and globally. Despite their youth, they have emerged as a leading figure in Singapore's activism scene, driven by a vision of collective unity and enduring change. They are now actively pioneering their activism on their social media profiles.

ISAAC NEO

he/him

Field(s) of Interest

Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- SG Climate Rally – *Editorial Co-head*
- Beyond Social Services – *Consultant*

Resource(s)

- Situating Singapore Substack
- ***Organising a Climate Movement for the Many*** in **We Are Not The Enemy: The Practice of Advocacy in Singapore** (co-written with Kristian-Marc James Paul). *Ethos Books, 2024.*
- ***Crisis and Inequality: Social Protection Gaps in Pandemic Singapore*** in **Who Cares? COVID-19 Social Protection Response in Southeast Asia** (co-written with Dr Stephanie Chok). *Silkworm Books, 2023*

"As a former political science student, I know all too well our stereotype of being annoying blowhards. But given elections happen only once every five years, and it is actually in our field of expertise, please permit me this rare chance to climb on my soapbox and share my reflections." *Isaac on GE2025*

Major Events Led/Participated In

We Are Not The Enemy [Aug 3, 2024] - This is a book launch event held at Monk's Brew Club. Isaac was invited to speak about his contribution, co-written with Kristian-Marc James Paul, titled *"Organising a Climate Movement for the Many."* In it, they reflect on SG Climate Rally's efforts to build a broad-based climate justice movement, including challenges like navigating Singapore's regulatory environment.

Singapore Independent Media Fair [July 20, 2024] - An event organized by Singapore Unbound and Mekong Review to promote independent media through exhibitor booths and discussions on press freedom, Isaac served as a panelist alongside Kirsten Han, Cherian George, and Ariffin Sha, sharing insights on how independent media have changed news coverage in a forum titled *"Breaking and Remaking News".*

New.Now.Next Media Conference (N3Con) AAJA-Asia [May 25, 2024] - Isaac hosted a session *How to Grow an Independent Media Ecosystem* where he focused on strategies for nurturing independent media in Asia, drawing on his experience with SG Climate Rally and other civic initiatives.

More about Isaac

Isaac is a Singaporean climate justice advocate, writer, and geopolitical risk analyst known for his work in fostering civic engagement and amplifying marginalized voices. A graduate of the National University of Singapore with a degree in political science, he met fellow activist Suraendher Kumarr at Tembusu College, where they both resided during their undergraduate years, forging connections that shaped their shared commitment to social change.

Isaac's activism centers on the disproportionate impact of environmental crises on vulnerable communities like migrant workers and low-income groups. His efforts include:

- **SG Climate Rally:** As co-head of the editorial team, Isaac shapes narratives that connect climate change to social equity, advocating for a just transition to Singapore's net-zero emissions goal by 2050.
- **Podcasts**: Isaac co-hosts the *SocialService.sg* podcast, including the *"Civic Engagement and Action"* series with Kwan Jin Yao, where he interviews Singaporeans creating spaces for political participation. In 2025, he concluded the *"Before the Ballot"* series, discussing key election issues ahead of Singapore's General Elections.
- **Published Works**: Isaac's writings on civil society and activism have appeared in outlets like *Jom*, *TODAY,* and *Rice Media*. Notable pieces include *"Student Activism is Proving that Singaporean Apathy May Soon No Longer Exist"* (Rice Media, 2019) – see full list of works on isaacneo.com.

Operating in Singapore's tightly regulated civic space, Isaac's pragmatic approach has made him a key voice in challenging apathy and building community-driven advocacy. His work, from podcasts to public events, inspires a more engaged and equitable Singapore.

JOLOVAN WHAM

He/Him

Field(s) of Interest

Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics (HOME) – *Former Executive Director*
- Workfair Singapore – *Founder*
- Function8sg
- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC)

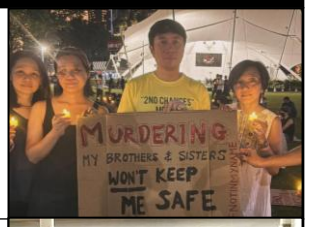
Resource(s)

Instagram: @jwham

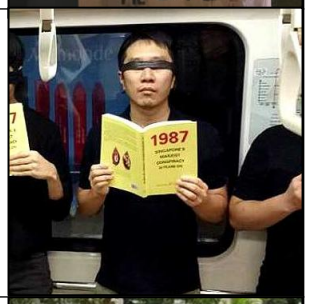
"By breaking the law and putting it in the spotlight and getting the issues ventilated in court, it helps to raise awareness. It also helps to push the boundary of what is acceptable dissent in Singapore." *Jolovan, 2025*

Major Events Led/Participated In

Protest for Pannir Selvam [February 19, 2025] - Jolovan co-organized a candlelight vigil at Hong Lim Park for death row inmate Pannir Selvam, rallying over 200 activists to demand a moratorium on Singapore's death penalty and highlight concerns over fair trial rights. The event, marked by speeches and songs, gained renewed hope when Pannir's execution was stayed hours later.



MRT Protest [June 3, 2017] - This is a silent protest on an MRT train in Singapore to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Operation Spectrum, where participants held books about the 1987 Marxist Conspiracy detentions to highlight ongoing curbs on free expression. Organized by Jolovan, he was subsequently convicted under the Public Order Act for this unauthorized public assembly, fined S$3,000, and faced further state scrutiny, solidifying his reputation as a defiant advocate for civil liberties.



Civil Disobedience and Social Movements **[November 6, 2016]** - An indoor discussion on civil disobedience in Singapore, it featured a video call with Hong Kong activist Joshua Wong to inspire local activists by exploring non-violent resistance in restrictive political climates. Wham faced a S$7,000 fine and 10-day jail term in 2018 after a police investigation for lacking a permit under the Public Order Act, underscoring his commitment to challenging state authoritarianism despite legal repercussions.

More About Jolovan

Jolovan is a Singaporean human rights defender and social worker, renowned for his unwavering advocacy on migrant workers' rights, freedom of expression, and the abolition of the death penalty in Singapore's restrictive civic environment. Born to a prominent family—son of multi-millionaire businessman Johnny Wham, founder of Goldheart Jewelry—he transitioned from a career in social work to become the former executive director of the Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME), where he championed protections for vulnerable migrant laborers before serving as its social worker.

Jolovan's activism boldly intersects labor rights, civil liberties, and anti-capital punishment efforts, often through direct actions that expose state suppression, such as organizing protests against the 1987 Marxist Conspiracy detentions and vigils for executed individuals like Prabagaran Srivijayan in 2017.

> *"Abolition is also about reimaging what safety means to all of us. It's also about equality. I don't pretend to have the answers to these issues, but I do know that what transformative justice means is that we start to repair a lot of damages that have been caused to our relationships with one another."* *(Jolovan, 2023)*

Unfortunately, Jolovan's prominence has rendered him a frequent target of state reprisal, including multiple convictions under the Public Order Act for "illegal assemblies"—such as a S$3,000 fine in 2022 for a solo sign-holding act, an S$8,000 fine and 22 days in jail in 2021 for event organization, and five fresh charges in February 2025 for death row vigils between 2022 and 2023. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have condemned these as judicial harassment to deter dissent, yet Wham's refusal to pay fines—opting for jail terms—emboldens Singapore's nascent resistance movement, fostering greater awareness and solidarity one bold stand at a time.

KIRSTEN she/her HAN

Field(s) of Interest

Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Mekong Review – *Editor-In-Chief*
- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC) – *Co-Founder*
- Network of Independent Media for Better Understanding and Support (NIMBUS) – *Co-Founder*
- Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN)
- New Naratif

Resource(s)

wethecitizens.net

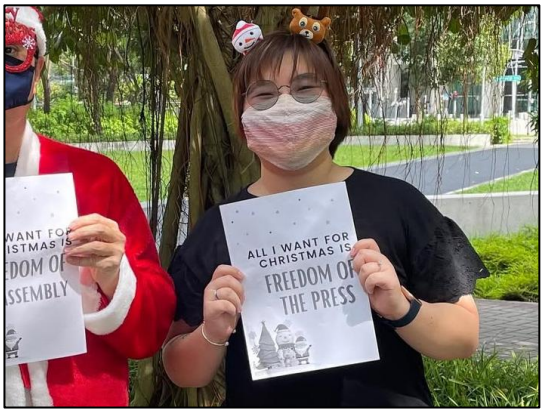
"A particular kind of person is susceptible to being preyed on by drug syndicates. A lot of them are deceived, manipulated, or threatened. They are labelled as drug traffickers, but they are also being trafficked." *Kirsten, 2025*

Major Events Led/Participated In

TJFEST2025: Voices from Death Row [July 17-20, 2025] - At TJFest2025, Kirsten shared about how death row inmates dropped from 1275 to 140 after a resentencing exercise following the abolition of mandatory death penalty in Malaysia. She also shared about Vui Kong who would have been spared from the death penalty if he was 18 instead of 19 at the point of sentencing.

Independent Media Fair [July 20, 2024 & July 1, 2023] - Kirsten played a pivotal role in launching the inaugural Singapore Independent Media Fair as a co-founder of NIMBUS and representative of her newsletter We, The Citizens. Held at The Projector, she co-organized the event with Singapore Unbound and Jom to promote media diversity through booths, panels, and workshops, and actively facilitating discussions on independent journalism and freedom of expression. In 2024, she continued her involvement as a NIMBUS Executive Committee member and co-host, contributing to planning and coordination for over 20 independent media and advocacy booths, fostering public engagement on issues like censorship and news evolution, consistent with her advocacy for media plurality and rights-based journalism.

Candlelight Vigil [April 26, 2022] - Kirsten led a group outside Changi Prison which held up electric candles and a sign that said *End Oppression, Not Life*. "The state is seeking to execute Nagaenthran and Datchinamurthy this week. Not in my name I say. Abolish the death penalty." (Kirsten, 2022)



More About Kirsten

Kirsten is a distinguished Singaporean journalist, writer, and social activist recognized for her advocacy in human rights, criminal justice reform, and media freedom.

For over a decade, Kirsten has been a leading anti-death penalty campaigner, co-founding We Believe in Second Chances in 2010, a Southeast Asian advocacy network, and the Transformative Justice Collective (TJC) in 2021, which campaigns to abolish capital punishment, end Singapore's "war on drugs," and advance broader criminal justice reforms. She is also engaged with Function 8, preserving oral histories of political detainees, and champions migrant workers' rights, gender justice, and press freedom.

Kirsten is a sought-after international writer and speaker. She has contributed to many international outlets such as *The New York Times, The Washington Post, Foreign Policy, The Guardian, and The Lowy Institute's The Interpreter*, often critiquing Singapore's governing People's Action Party (PAP) policies. Her notable engagements include:

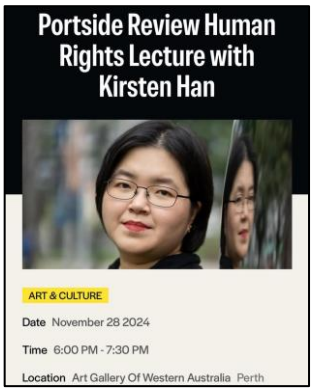
- **13 May 2023:** Spoke at Riwayat Bookstore in Kuala Lumpur about Mekong Review's mission.
- **9-11 Aug 2024:** Participated in Jakarta Content Week, discussing regional journalism.
- **21 Nov 2024:** Spoke at Better Read bookstore in Sydney, engaging literary audiences.
- **28 Nov 2024:** Delivered the Portside Review Human Rights Lecture at the Art Gallery of Western Australia in Perth.
- **6-7 Jun 2025:** Attended the Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network's Regional Conference in Manila, advocating for abolitionist policies.

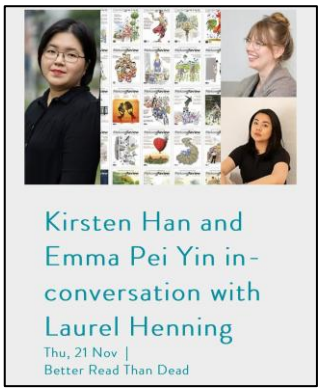
Han's work bridges journalism and activism, amplifying marginalized voices and challenging Singapore's restrictive civic landscape, earning her global recognition.

Articles in International Press by Kirsten Han

The Interpreter	Southeast Asia's death penalty laws: The ultimate political game (16 Dec 2024) https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/southeast-asia-s-death-penalty-laws-ultimate-political-game
The Guardian	Singapore's new 'foreign interference' law leaves journalists like me with an impossible puzzle (11 Oct 2021) http://theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/11/singapores-new-foreign-interference-law-leaves-journalists-like-me-with-an-impossible-puzzle
Foreign Policy	Singapore Is Trying To Forget Migrant Workers Are People (6 May 2020) https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/06/singapore-coronavirus-pandemic-migrant-workers/
The Washington Post	Singapore's new covid-18 cases reveal the country's two very different realities (16 Apr 2020) https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/04/16/singapores-new-covid-19-cases-reveal-countrys-two-very-different-realities/
The Guardian	A London DJ's punishment sheds light on Singapore's caning shame (15 Jan 2019) https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jan/15/outcry-london-dj-caning-singapore-ye-ming-yuen
The New York Times	What Trump Is Learning From Singapore – and Vice Versa (28 Mar 2018) https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/28/opinion/trump-singapore.html
The Washington Post	Why Singapore's moves to curb 'fake news' may backfire (5 Mar 2018) https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/03/05/why-singapores-moves-to-curb-fake-news-may-backfire/

Photos From Kirsten Han's International Events





KOKILA ANNAMALAI

she/her

Field(s) of Interest

Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC) – *Co-Founder*
- Workers Make Possible – *Co-Founder*
- Apa Itu Activist – *Co-Founder*

Resource(s)

Substack @learningfromthemargins

"The world I wake up to is far more terrifying. It's a world in which there are many death penalties. Each one, a fresh horror. When workers forced to travel on the back of lorries die on the road, it is a death penalty. When bodies are scorched in a factory fire or crash into the ground from skyscrapers, they are cleaning, it is a death penalty. When the poor lose their limbs and their lives because they cannot afford timely healthcare, it is a death penalty. When an overworked bus driver keels over his steering wheel after bring his bus safely to bay, it is a death penalty." *Kokila, 2023*

Major Events Led/Participated In

Letters for Palestine at the Istana [February 2, 2024] - In response to the civilian hardships in Gaza, about 70 individuals gathered outside Plaza Singapura to walk to the Istana, to deliver letters urging a cessation of Singapore's diplomatic ties with Israel. Kokila was instrumental in advising organizers, drawing on her experience with non-violent advocacy, such as coordinating letter deliveries for death row inmates. As a result, Kokila and two other organizers are facing charges for organizing an unauthorized procession under the public order act.

Anti-Death Penalty Protest [April 3, 2022] - This event marked the venue's reopening after a two-year COVID closure and was a response to the resumption of executions, including that of drug trafficker Abdul Kahar Othman on March 30, 2022. Kokila was one of the key organizers alongside Jolovan Wham. In her speech, she read aloud the names of individuals on death row, to highlight the scale of those affected and foster public empathy.

Fix Schools Not Students [January 26, 2021] - This is a protest outside of MOE HQ to advocate for better support for transgender students in schools. Kokila was a key figure in organizing the protest, driven by her commitment to social justice and amplifying marginalized voices, including those of transgender youth. Annamalai received a 24-month conditional warning for organizing the protest and breaching the police directive.

More About Koki

Koki was born September 3, 1988, in Singapore to an Indian heritage family with roots in Kerala, is a prominent human rights activist and sociologist.

> *"Though I was born in Singapore and have spent most of my life here, my family is from India and has always taught me that India is home."* *(Koki, 2014)*

She holds a degree in Sociology from the National University of Singapore and has worked as a community organizer, facilitator, researcher, and writer, including roles at Beyond Social Services and as Community Engagement Manager at AWARE Singapore.

Koki is renowned for her fierce advocacy against Singapore's death penalty, co-founding the Transformative Justice Collective (TJC) in 2022 to support death row inmates and push for abolition post-COVID execution resumptions. She became the first Singaporean activist to publicly defy the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA) in October 2024, refusing to correct social media posts criticizing arbitrary execution scheduling, risking jail time to challenge online speech curbs.

> *"I don't make this choice to defy the POFMA order lightly, I make this choice, even after considering the costs to me and those who care about me because I feel it is necessary."* *(Koki, 2024)*

Her activism extends to labor and tenant rights via Workers Make Possible, Queer Rights, and Palestinian solidarity. Despite facing charges, investigations, and bail, Annamalai persists, blogging on Substack about social justice and civil disobedience.

> *"Some people defend protests by declaring that they are not disruptive. I believe they should be disruptive…Protests should disrupt oppression, exploitation, abuse."* *(Koki, 2022)*

NATASHA D'CRUZ

she/her

Field(s) of Interest

Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC)
- ECPAT International

"We do this out of a simple sense of friendship and humanity, that no families should have to face alone one of the most testing moments in their lives. As we walked to the Istana, we learned about the struggles of their imprisoned kin fighting their sentences despite prohibitive laws and oppressive prison conditions. We are ashamed and outraged that a policy claiming to protect us from drugs has etched into these families' lives years of separation, anguish, and grief in slow motion while their kin fight upstream against their almost-certain execution." *Natasha, 2025*

Resource(s)

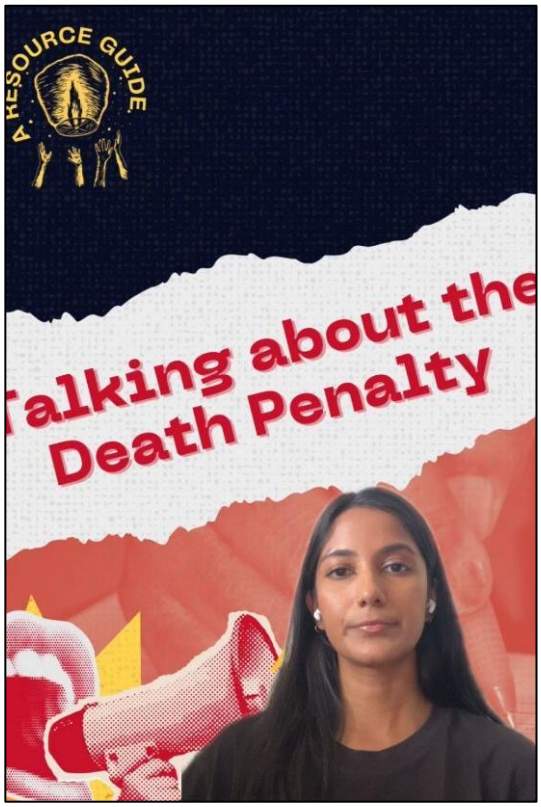
Talking About the Death Penalty, A Resource Guide

Major Events Led/Participated In

Clemency Appeal for Datchinamurthy, Saminathan, Lingkesvaran, and Jumat [September 12, 2025] - Natasha and other TJC members accompanied families of death row prisoners to deliver a joint clemency appeal to President Tharman and Prime Minister Lawrence Wong at the Istana.

TJC World Day Against The Death Penalty 2024 [October 20, 2024] - Natasha attended a panel discussion titled "Censored: A Conversation in Lieu of an Exhibition", which contended with what was lost through state censorship and was sitting in the front row.

Global Boys Summit [June 6-8, 2023] - Natasha, as a part of ECPAT International, was a member of the organizing committee for the inaugural Global Boys Summit, a unique platform for practitioners from around the world to collaborate and exchange ideas on supporting boys at risk and survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse. The event took place in Casablanca, Morocco and AMANE, a Moroccan non-governmental child-rights organization was a co-organizer.



More About Natasha

Natasha is a dynamic communications professional whose passion for human rights fuels her work in both global and local spheres. As a Communications Officer at ECPAT International, she crafts impactful narratives to combat child exploitation and trafficking, bringing a global lens to her advocacy. Her academic foundation at the University of Technology Sydney sharpened her media and storytelling skills, preparing her for a versatile career.

Natasha's professional journey spans diverse roles, from marketing at Radarr (a Genesys company) and Customedia to coordinating events at the Sydney Film Festival and supporting operations at Libraco Services S Pte Ltd. These experiences honed her ability to engage audiences and amplify causes through strategic communication.

Since November 2021, Natasha has been a dedicated volunteer with Singapore's Transformative Justice Collective (TJC), contributing to campaigns against the death penalty and for criminal justice reform. Likely leveraging her expertise in content creation or social media strategy, she supports TJC's mission in a low-profile yet meaningful way, navigating Singapore's regulatory constraints with care.

On Instagram, Natasha runs @natanotherfilmpage, a creative space where she shares cinematic insights, blending her love for film with subtle advocacy. This platform reflects her ability to use storytelling as a tool for connection and awareness.

In Singapore's challenging activist landscape, Natasha's blend of professional skill, volunteer commitment, and cultural engagement makes her a quiet force for change. Her story invites us to see how communication can drive justice, inspiring readers to contribute to a fairer world.

RAUDHAH

she/her

Field(s) of Interest	
Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

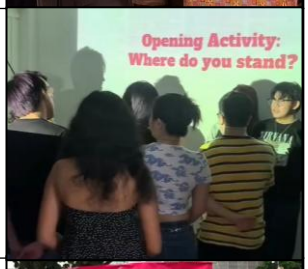
- Alliance Against the Death Penalty SG (AADP)
- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC)
- Student Actions for Transformative Justice (SATU)
- Workers' Party – *Volunteer*

"So what is SATU? We are a group of students coming together to unlearn and relearn about punishment in Singapore. Students around Singapore calls (for) an end for punishment and effort towards transformative and restorative justice." *Raudhah, 2025*

Major Events Led/Participated In

TJFEST2025: Voices from Death Row [July 17-20, 2025] - At TJFest2025's closing open mic session, Raudhah delivered a powerful address, inspiring students to champion a future that rejects punitive systems in favor of transformative justice. With her characteristic passion, she highlighted the vital role of Student Actions for Transformative Justice (SATU), urging young activists to amplify marginalized voices and advocate for systemic change.

DP101: (Un)learning the death penalty [June 21, 2025] - Raudhah and other SATU members spearheaded a dynamic workshop that engaged 20 students in a deep exploration of the death penalty. Through group discussions, heartfelt storytelling, and critical conversations, the event challenged participants to rethink punitive systems and embrace a vision of justice rooted in humanity and reform.



Labour Day Rally [May 25, 2025] - Raudhah, together with other SATU members, led a contingent at the Labour Day Rally. This event underscores her commitment to amplifying student voices in Singapore's labor and economic justice movements.

More About Raudhah

Raudhah, known online as @betonthehijabi, is a vibrant presence in Singapore's student activism scene, recognized for her pivotal role as a founding member of Student Actions for Transformative Justice (SATU), the student wing of the Transformative Justice Collective (TJC). With SATU, Raudhah has been instrumental in mobilizing students to confront issues like the mandatory death penalty and broader criminal justice reform.

Beyond her work with SATU, Raudhah channels her passion for social justice as a dedicated volunteer with the Workers' Party in Hougang, Singapore's longstanding opposition stronghold. In this role, she supports community outreach and grassroots efforts, bridging her advocacy for transformative justice with the party's push for accountable governance and workers' rights. Her involvement reflects a holistic commitment to equity, whether on campus or in the heart of Hougang's vibrant political scene.

Through her Instagram, @betonthehijabi, Raudhah amplifies SATU's work with a mix of bold advocacy and personal reflection. Her posts, from event flyers to poignant captions about the emotional weight of activism, invite followers to join the movement while navigating Singapore's tightly regulated digital space.

In a city where laws like the Public Order Act and POFMA cast long shadows over activism, Raudhah's work is a beacon of resilience. Her ability to organize, emcee, and connect communities shows that youth-led movements can spark meaningful dialogue, even in the face of constraints. Raudhah's story is a call to action, reminding us that every voice raised, every event emceed, every post shared, can ripple toward a more just world.

ROCKY HOWE

He/Him

Field(s) of Interest	
Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC)

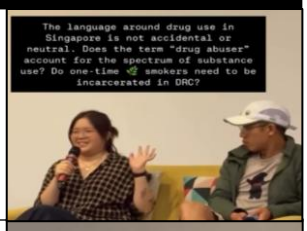
Resource(s)

orderandlaw.sg

"There was strong internationalism in the 1970s and 1980s, tied back to a shared anti-colonial struggle. This is something that is reviving today with Palestine solidarity and sentiments for collective liberation. We are not just trying to free Palestine, but Palestine is freeing us. That's what the government is afraid of." *Rocky, 2025*

Major Events Led/Participated In

***Blood on Your Hands, AGC* [September 29, 2025]** - Organized by Rocky, this rally at Hong Lim Park stands in solidarity with five death row prisoners facing imminent execution following recent court rulings. It demands accountability from institutions upholding capital punishment and urgently calls for an immediate moratorium on the death penalty in Singapore.



World Day Against Anti-Death Penalty [October 20, 2024] - Rocky participated in the panel discussion "CENSORED: A conversation in lieu of an exhibition", addressing the intensified censorship faced by anti-death penalty activists in Singapore. He highlighted the state's efforts to suppress voices opposing capital punishment, including through POFMA orders and restrictions on prisoners' communications, as part of a broader struggle against the denial of personhood for death row inmates.

***End Oppression, Not Life* [April 25, 2022]** - Rocky was investigated by Singapore police for participating in two alleged "illegal assemblies" outside Changi Prison, including taking photos with a sign reading "END OPPRESSION, NOT LIFE" before Nagaenthran K Dharmalingam's execution in April 2022. In response, Rocky filed a lawsuit on September 23, 2022, seeking a court declaration that the police abused their powers by labeling these peaceful acts as an "illegal procession," highlighting broader issues of police overreach and harassment in Singapore.

More About Rocky

Rocky is a Singaporean human rights defender and a leading voice in the fight against capital punishment, known for his bold activism within the city-state's tightly controlled civic space. As a core member of the Transformative Justice Collective (TJC), he has played a pivotal role for several years in challenging Singapore's punitive justice system, advocating for the abolition of the death penalty and amplifying the stories of those on death row.

Rocky's activism centers on confronting state power and exposing systemic injustices, notably through high-profile actions like the April 25, 2022, vigil outside Changi Prison, where he displayed a sign reading "END OPPRESSION, NOT LIFE" to protest the execution of Nagaenthran K Dharmalingam. His work also intersects with broader issues of censorship and state overreach, as seen in his participation in the October 2024 panel discussion "CENSORED: A conversation in lieu of an exhibition," which addressed the silencing of anti-death penalty voices. His key strategies include:

- **Legal resistance:** Filing a lawsuit against the Singapore police in September 2022 for alleged abuse of power, challenging their labeling of peaceful vigils as "illegal processions."
- **Public engagement:** Co-organizing events like the World Day 2024 panel to expose censorship tactics and amplify silenced voices of death row inmates.
- **Community advocacy:** Collaborating with activists like Kirsten Han to raise awareness through protests and discussions, fostering dialogue on state accountability.

Rocky's outspoken activism has drawn state scrutiny, including police investigations under the Public Order Act and POFMA for his anti-death penalty work. Despite this, his efforts continue to galvanize Singapore's civil society, pushing for a compassionate justice system and inspiring resistance against authoritarian control.

SOBIKUN NAHAR

she/her

Field(s) of Interest

Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC)
- Singaporeans for Palestine
- Beyond Social Services
- The Community Theatre
- sgacadboycott

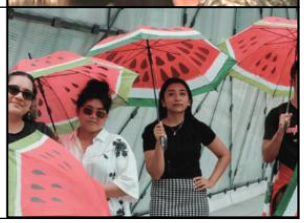
"Whatever assumptions that you may have, or, beliefs that you choose to immediately stick to because it's comfortable, try your best to challenge yourself to think outside of that, and don't be afraid to think radically." *Sobikun, 2020*

Major Events Led/Participated In

Anti-Death Penalty Protest [Feb 19, 2025] -The vigil was specifically held in memory of Pannir Selvam Pranthaman, a death row prisoner whose execution was scheduled for that day but was unexpectedly stayed by the courts. Sobi was one of the event organizers as a TJC activist. During the vigil, she publicly condemned Singapore's death penalty regime in a speech, describing it as a "shameful legacy" and calling for urgent reforms to humanize the justice system.

Putting the Death Penalty on Trial: World Day 2024 [October 10, 2024] - Sobi, Kirsten Han, Kokila Annamalai, Kai Xiong, Din, and Dr Chee Soon Juan had a panel discussion *Stop The Killing: How can we win a moratorium on the death penalty?* Where they explored how to navigate conversations about the war on drugs and how the anti-death penalty movement can be taken further.

Letters for Palestine at the Istana [February 2, 2024] - In response to the civilian hardships in Gaza, Sobi organized a march to Istana where participants delivered letters urging a cessation of Singapore's diplomatic ties with Israel. As a result, Sobi is facing charges for organizing an unauthorized procession under the public order act.



More About Sobi

Sobi is a Singaporean community worker and activist known for her bold advocacy against system injustices. Born to a Malay family, she has emerged as a key voice in Singapore's civil society, particularly through her work with the Transformative Justice Collective (TJC) where she has been a core member for the past three years.

Sobi's activism also extends to intersecting issues like the ongoing genocide in Palestine, poverty alleviation, combating sexual violence, reflecting a commitment to anti-oppression movements that challenge state power and colonial legacies. Her efforts emphasize building critical consciousness, and educating the public on how punitive justice perpetuates inequality. These include:

- **Door-to-door outreach:** Canvassing neighborhoods to share stories of death row inmates and gather signatures for clemency petitions.
- **Applied theatre:** Using interactive performances to humanize the experiences of the incarcerated, staging events that blend storytelling with audience participation to evoke empathy and spur action.
- **Public vigils and protests:** Co-organizing candlelight gatherings, such as the February 19, 2025, anti-death penalty vigil at Hong Lim Park, where over 200 people mourned executed individuals and demanded a moratorium.

Sobi's visibility has made her a target in Singapore's "repressed" civic space. She was one of three TJC members—alongside Kokila Annamalai and Rocky Howe—summoned for investigation under POFMA Section 7 for social media posts on executions, despite prior compliance with correction orders.

In a state where dissent is often criminalized, her work inspires a growing movement for a more just Singapore, one vigil, performance, and letter at a time.

SURAENDHER KUMARR

he/him

Field(s) of Interest

Death Penalty Laws	Migrant Worker Rights
Palestinian Rights	Minority Rights
Queer Rights	Environment
Press Freedom	Student Activism

Organization(s) Involved

- Workers Make Possible
- Transformative Justice Collective (TJC)
- HOME – *Vice-President of the Board of Directors*
- Beyond Social Services *(former)*

Resources

We Are Not The Enemy: The Practice of Advocacy in Singapore

"When I was in school, what I saw of the Hock Lee bus riots were buses on fire. I see organizing. I see people who are serious about what their work is and I see a lot of people who see that, there's a lot of value in this, and I see something that is a form of empowerment…" Kumarr, 2021

Major Events Led/Participated In

Singaporean Solidarity at Melbourne Workers and Students' Strike for Palestine [September 12, 2025] - In an Instagram post, Kumarr shared an image of himself at the Melbourne workers and students' strike for Palestine, in attempts to amplify suppressed voices from Singapore. Holding up a sign calling for Singapore to "STOP THE CHARADE, SANCTION ISRAEL NOW", he spotlighted Singapore's complicity with Israel through trade and investments, particularly in military weaponry.

Solidarity Walk for NUS Gaza Memorial Participants [February 28, 2025]-– In support of some NUS students and alumni facing police investigations after organizing a memorial for Palestinian victims in Gaza, Kumarr participated in a solidarity walk, whilst renewing calls for Palestinian rights and an end to institutional complicity in the conflict.

Power To The People: Labour Day Rally 2025 [May 1, 2025] - Organised by Workers Make Possible and SG Climate Rally, Kumarr was one of the key organisers, who brought together around 700 workers and activists to demand for fair labour conditions, living wages and a just society in Singapore. This was the third rendition of the rally, co-organised by Kumarr, that spotlighted the need for independent unions to counter unjust work environments.

More About Suraendher

Suraendher Kumarr, born in 1994, is a Singaporean activist and community organizer with Workers Make Possible, known for his advocacy in democracy, particularly migrant worker rights and climate justice.

> *"Go overseas to do law… they didn't have the grades to do law here, (so) they went overseas to do. I don't have that kind of luxury." (Suraendher Kumarr – You Do You, 2025)*

Raised in working class family by a single mother in a family of six, Kumarr relied on extended family support and prioritised education and pragmaticism to overcome his financial limitations. His determination led him to graduate with First Class Honours in Political Science from the National University of Singapore, where he was also honored as valedictorian at the Sinda Excellence Award.

> *"We need to build and sustain a movement that will enable not just migrants but all workers in Singapore to organise themselves and fight for their rights." (Kumarr, 2024)*

Kumarr's activism was sparked by personal experiences and key moments. An internship with a migrant labour non-governmental organization ignited his passion for supporting vulnerable communities. His interest in social activism deepened after attending a film screening speaking about detentions without trial in Singapore. This experience prompted him to investigate further, shaping his formative thoughts on social justice and activism.

A key member of SG Climate Rally (SGCR), founded in 2019 to push for climate justice, Kumarr has been pivotal in advancing its mission. He is currently the Vice-President of Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME), aimed to support migrant workers. In recent years, his activism has expanded on a global scale, including petitions for sanctions against Israel.

In Singapore's constrained civic space, bold human rights activists rise to challenge systemic inequities. Born from a political science student project, ***Voices of Defiance*** captures their stories. Through writing, speaking, and organizing, contemporary activists confront issues like the death penalty and global crises, risking much for a fairer world. Dive into this encyclopedia and find the spark to join their fight.